

**§ 45-11-7. State fire academy; executive director; division of fire services development.**

- (1) There is hereby created a State Fire Academy for the training and education of persons engaged in municipal, county and industrial fire protection. The Commissioner of Insurance shall appoint an Executive Director of the State Fire Academy who, along with his employees, shall be designated as a division of the Insurance Department. The executive director shall serve at the pleasure of the Commissioner of Insurance. The State Fire Academy shall be under the supervision and direction of the Executive Director of the State Fire Academy. State Fire Academy training programs for fire personnel shall be conducted at the academy with seminars to be conducted in other sections of the state as and when the State Fire Academy Advisory Board considers it necessary and advisable.

The Commissioner of Insurance may establish and charge reasonable fees for the training programs and other services provided by the academy. A record of all funds received pursuant to this paragraph shall be maintained as is required for other monies pursuant to Section 45-11-5.

The Executive Director of the State Fire Academy is authorized and empowered to purchase, operate and maintain mobile fire fighting equipment as he may find necessary and proper for the operation of the academy subject to approval of the Commissioner of Insurance. The equipment may be utilized wherever training sessions may be held at the discretion of the State Fire Academy Advisory Board.

- (2) The Commissioner of Insurance shall be authorized to undertake appropriate action to accomplish and fulfill the purposes of the State Fire Academy, including the hiring of instructors and personnel, the lease and purchase of appropriate training equipment and to lease, purchase or construct suitable premises and quarters for conducting annual school and seminars, as the State Fire Academy Advisory Board may deem necessary and required for such purposes. Any contract entered into under and by virtue of the provisions of this section shall first be submitted to and approved by the Public Procurement Review Board, and construction pursuant to the contract shall be under the supervision of the Governor's Office of General Services.
- (3) Vouchers for operating expense for the State Fire Academy shall be signed by the Executive Director of the State Fire Academy and payment thereof shall be made from such funds to be derived from a special allocation from the State Fire Academy Fund as provided in Section 45-11-5.
- (4) The State Fire Academy is hereby officially designated as the agency of this state to conduct training for fire personnel on a statewide basis in which members of all duly constituted fire departments may participate. This subsection shall not be construed to affect the authority of any fire department to conduct training for its own personnel.

- (5) Each state agency, private agency or federal agency which provides training for the fire service shall coordinate such efforts with the State Fire Academy to prevent duplication of cost and to insure standardization of training.
- (6) The State Fire Academy shall present an appropriate certificate signifying the successful completion of its prescribed courses.
- (7) National fire fighter standards approved by the Mississippi Fire Personnel Minimum Standards and Certification Board shall be used as the basis for classroom instruction at the fire academy.
- (8) The Commissioner of Insurance, Executive Director of the State Fire Academy, and the Mississippi Fire Personnel Minimum Standards and Certification Board shall coordinate all state programs related to fire department operations.
- (9) The Commissioner of Insurance is hereby authorized and empowered to establish standard guidelines for the use of, and accountability for, municipal and county fire protection funds distributed pursuant to the provisions of Sections 83-1-37 and 83-1-39, Mississippi Code of 1972. Such guidelines shall include requirements for the establishment of record keeping and reports to the Commissioner of Insurance by municipalities and counties relating to the receipt and expenditure of fire protection funds, the training of fire department personnel and the submission to the Commissioner of Insurance of other data reasonably related to local fire protection responsibilities which the Commissioner of Insurance deems necessary for the performance of the duties of the State Fire Academy Advisory Board.
- (10) In order that the Commissioner of Insurance may more effectively execute the duties imposed upon him by subsection (9) of this section, there is hereby created within the State Fire Academy a Division of Fire Services Development. The division shall be staffed by a Fire Services Development Coordinator, appointed by the executive director of the academy from his current staff and by such other personnel as deemed by the Commissioner of Insurance. The division shall work with municipal and county fire coordinators to ensure effective implementation of guidelines established pursuant to subsection (9) of this section and shall serve in an advisory capacity for all aspects of fire service improvement. The Fire Service Coordinator shall annually notify the Department of Finance and Administration of those municipalities and counties which are not eligible to receive a portion of fire protection fund distributions because of failure to comply with requirements imposed in Sections 83-1-37 and 83-1-39 as a prerequisite to receipt of such funds.
- (11) There is created in the State Treasury a separate account to be known as the "State Fire Academy Construction Fund." The State Treasurer shall transfer on July 1, 1997, the sum of Six Hundred Seventy-five Thousand Dollars (\$675,000.00) and on July 1, 1998, the sum of Six Hundred Seventy-five Thousand Dollars (\$675,000.00) from the State Fire Academy Fund 3502 into the separate account created in this subsection. Monies in such account shall be expended solely, upon legislative appropriations, to defray expenses

related to the construction of capital improvements project known as "Fire Safety and Education Building" and parking areas at the State Fire Academy by the Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management of the Office of General Services and to pay any indebtedness incurred to accomplish such construction. Funds not used after the completion of this capital improvements project shall be transferred back into State Fund 3502.

**SOURCES: Laws, 1997, ch. 559, § 1, eff from and after July 1, 1997.**